



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality
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Memorandum

TO: Health Care Facility Chief Executive Officers, Administrators, and Occupational Health Leadership

FROM: Elizabeth Daake Kelley, MPH, MBA, Director
Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality

SUBJECT: Reporting Requirement Extensions for Health Care Facilities

DATE: April 28, 2020

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) continues to work with state, federal and local partners on the outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), caused by the virus SARS-CoV-2. DPH understands the important role that all healthcare facilities serve in caring for Massachusetts residents.

Providing care for people seeking treatment for possible Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) may prove to be especially challenging for health care personnel and facilities should a surge in volume of patients with possible exposure to or symptoms of COVID-19 illness overwhelm the capacity of health care practitioners and facilities. As part of the ongoing state response to COVID-19, DPH is issuing this guidance to health care facilities to ease the burden of certain reporting requirements to ensure health care facilities can focus on providing needed care to patients.

Please refer to the following list of reporting requirements to determine if/when reporting will be required by DPH during the state of emergency.

Continued Reporting During the State of Emergency

- Licensed facilities must continue to notify DPH immediately by phone in the event of:
 - Death that is unanticipated, not related to the natural course of illness or condition, or that is the result of an error or other incident.

- Full or partial evacuation due to fire, flood, utility failure, or other disaster.
- Code Black (hospitals only).

Modified Reporting During the State of Emergency

- Allegations of Abuse, Neglect and Misappropriation, Serious Incident Reporting, Serious Reportable Events and Serious Adverse Drug Events.
 - Reports of abuse, neglect and misappropriation and incidents involving significant bodily injury must be reported not later than 2 hours after the allegation is made, if the events that cause the allegation involve abuse or result in serious bodily injury, or not later than 24 hours if the events that cause the allegation do not involve abuse and do not result in serious bodily injury.
 - All other incidents, serious reportable events and serious adverse reportable events must be reported within seven (7) days of the occurrence of the incident.
 - For the duration of the state of emergency, health care facilities must submit a limited report including the following information:
 - Resident/Patient Name
 - Type of Incident
 - Date of incident
 - Harm type
 - Brief narrative statement on incident (one to two sentences)
 - Brief statement of corrective measures (one to two sentences)
 - Name of accused when reporting abuse, neglect or misappropriation.
 - Please note that a full report may be required upon request of DPH.

Suspended Reporting During the State of Emergency

- Reporting of Seasonal Influenza Vaccination of Healthcare Personnel for the 2019-2020 Influenza Season.
 - DPH extends the deadline for reporting until thirty (30) days after the state of emergency is terminated.
- Monthly opioid reporting (Hospitals Only).
 - DPH waives the monthly opioid reporting requirements for the duration of the state of emergency. Healthcare facilities must submit all required opioid data for this time period no later than three (3) months after the state of emergency is terminated.
- Quarterly ICU registered nurse-to-patient staffing ratios (Hospitals Only).
 - DPH waives the quarterly ICU registered nurse-to-patient staffing ratios reporting requirement for the duration of the state of emergency.
- Primary Stroke Service (PSS) Reporting (Hospitals Only)
 - DPH waives PSS data reporting until thirty (30) days after the state of emergency is terminated. Hospitals must submit all PSS data for this time period no later than three (3) months after the state of emergency is terminated.

DPH strongly encourages all health care facilities in Massachusetts to monitor the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) website and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website for up-to-date information and resources:

- CMS website: <https://www.cms.gov/About-CMS/Agency-Information/Emergency/EPRO/Current-Emergencies/Current-Emergencies-page>
- CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/index.html>
 - For reference, since first responders are part of the COVID-19 response, the CDC healthcare personnel exposure guidance may be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assessment-hcp.html>

Additionally, please visit DPH's website that provides up-to-date information on COVID-19 in Massachusetts: <https://www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus>.